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SUBJECT: President Morales will Travel to COP-15 to Advocate for  
Mother Earth Rights

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: President Morales confirmed December 8th that he will attend the 15th Conference of the Parties under the UN Climate Change Convention (COP-15). He will travel to Denmark from Cuba where this weekend he will attend the ALBA (Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas) 5th Anniversary celebration. RenC) Gonzalo Orellana, Minister of Environment and Water, will travel with him. The Bolivian delegation already at the conference includes Pablo Salon as Climate Change Ambassador and AngC)lica Navarro as Head of the Delegation. The GOB also announced that it will make its formal climate change position public in the near term. Morales will use his attendance at COP-15 to confront prosperous countries and to promote his contention that the developed world must pay its "ecological debt" to humanity. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) One of the most biodiverse and poorest countries in Latin America, and home to approximately 20% of the world's tropical glaciers, Bolivia is vulnerable to climate change impacts. These include reduced food security, water shortages, more numerous and more intense weather events, greater prevalence of insect-borne diseases (e.g., malaria and dengue), and more frequent and more severe forest fires. A recent OXFAM report on climate change in Bolivia reports that many rural farmers and provincial residents believe that the climate is changing and that frequency and magnitude of damage caused by climate events is increasing. A strong local constituency believes that it is a great injustice that poor communities in Latin America have to pay such a high price for a situation they had little responsibility for creating.

¶3. (U) The GOB has picked up these themes and is leading a group of countries advocating that climate change is not just an environmental issue, but also a development issue. Morales' original 20-point list of demands is the toughest line taken by any national leader. He has repeatedly referred to "savage capitalism" as the worst enemy of humanity and his standard line is that capitalism is responsible for creating global warming. He concludes that developed countries need to pay back developing countries for both a mitigation and adaptation climate change debt to the tune of 1% of each country's GDP.

¶4. (U) The GOB of Bolivia has indicated that it will unveil its formal climate change proposal in conjunction with the President's trip and has begun releasing components, including Morales' latest proposal for developing countries to exchange their international debt for the developed world's "ecological debt." The GOB climate change position also includes the establishment of an international Climate Justice Court; a contention that climate change mitigation/adaptation technologies should not be subject to patent or other IPR restrictions; promotion of the REDD+ Program (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation); and inclusion of "Mother Earth Rights" in the final Document of the COP. Morales has added that he would like the new climate change declaration to include four basic principles: ecosystems' right to life, the right for biodiversity to regenerate, the right to live without contamination, and the right to live in harmony with nature.

¶5. (SBU) Brazilian Political Counselor Julio Bitelli told us the GOB took a hard-line at the recent Manaus summit organized by President Lula to discuss climate change issues, refusing to sign the summit declaration. Bitelli expects the GOB to maintain a hard-line especially since Morales will travel to the ALBA conference December 13-14 in Havana to establish a common ALBA stance. Bitelli noted that there will be no moderating force present in Havana. Danish Ambassador Morten Elkjaer told us separately that the GOB has maintained its radical position in

conversations with the European Union. Elkjaer said Morales will meet with the Danish government to discuss clean energy technologies, but he does not expect the GOB to play a constructive role at the Copenhagen conference.  
Creamer